

Dr. Nina McClelland Laboratory for Water Chemistry and Environmental Analysis at The University of Toledo. Onward to Dr. McClelland, and her legacy to the future.

HONORING BAXTER BRECHT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Baxter Brecht. Baxter is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Baxter has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Baxter has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Baxter has served his troop as Assistant Patrol Leader, earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, and become an Ordeal Member of the Order of the Arrow. Baxter has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Baxter built storage shelving to help preserve and inventory all of the historical displays at the Clay County Historical Society Museum in Liberty, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Baxter Brecht for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING FANNIE LOU HAMER, ANNIE DEVINE, AND VICTORIA GRAY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight remarkable historical activists, Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Devine, and Victoria Gray.

Coming on the heels of its historic challenge to the seating of the all-white Mississippi delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) moved to unseat Mississippi's all-white Congressional delegation the next year. The MFDP revealed how continued illegal discrimination led to the election of five white men to represent a state, where the population was nearly half African American. Through its Freedom Elections, open to anyone regardless of race, the MFDP proved that black voters would exercise their constitutional rights if given the chance and that their votes would undermine Jim Crow politics in America. The MFDP took its challenge all the way to the U.S. House of Representatives.

In December 1964, MFDP attorneys not only rejected the seating of the men who comprised the Mississippi delegation ahead of the 1965 Congressional session but asserted that Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Devine, and Victoria

Gray should be seated in their stead in their own respective districts. These three black women were long-time civil rights activists and MFDP stalwarts and had attempted to run for Congress in the Fall of 1964. After they were denied a place on the official Mississippi ballot, Hamer, Devine, and Gray were elected through the MFDP Freedom Vote. Though it had no recognized legal standing, the Freedom Vote was the only true democratic election in Mississippi. Thus, the MFDP argued that these women were entitled to the state's Congressional seats in their districts as the only democratically elected officials from the state.

On January 3, 1965, Hamer, Devine, Gray, and more than 600 other black Mississippians welcomed members of Congress to the Capitol in support of the MFDP challenge. When Speaker of the House John McCormack began the traditional roll call, Congressman William Fitts Ryan of New York objected to the seating of Mississippi's Thomas Abernethy. More than sixty U.S. Representatives joined Ryan in that dissent and forced McCormack to wait to seat the entire Mississippi delegation until the rest of Congress had been sworn in. Then, House Majority Leader Carl Albert of Oklahoma moved that the MFDP challenge be recognized as legitimate and that Mississippi's all-white delegation be seated until a full hearing could be conducted. Albert's Resolution passed the House by a vote of 276 to 149. With two-thirds of U.S. Congressmen supporting the right to a challenge, the Committee on House Administration prepared to hear the MFDP's arguments.

The state's segregationist delegation employed an army of white attorneys, recruited at the behest of the Mississippi Bar Association, to mount their defense during the summer of 1965, but the MFDP organized dozens of volunteer lawyers from across the country to prepare its case. They issued subpoenas, conducted depositions, and gathered testimony from black voters about the discrimination they had encountered in the state for decades. Backed by hundreds of pages of documents in support of the challenge, the MFDP was prepared for a hearing to be held in the Fall of 1965.

When the MFDP challenge was finally heard on September 13, 1965, Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Devine, and Victoria Gray testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Elections that they had been denied access to the ballot because of their race and should be seated to represent the State of Mississippi in Congress. Three days later, their challenge came to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote, and Congressman Ryan of New York, who had first stood to object to the seating of the all-white delegation in January, accompanied the three women to sit on the House floor with Congressional Democrats during the debate. Their presence made them the first black women on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives and the first black Mississippians there since Reconstruction. Undaunted by the vitriol they had faced, Annie Devine, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Victoria Gray sat nobly through the deliberations.

Although a vote of 228–143 defeated the MFDP challenge, nearly 40 percent of Congressmen had gone on record in support of Hamer, Devine, and Gray. A month before their challenge was heard, the 1965 Voting Rights Act had passed, which many members

of Congress believed had rectified the inequities that the MFDP described, and those Congressmen did not believe they should act on behalf of the MFDP in the name of past discrimination. Nevertheless, the heroic efforts of Hamer, Devine, Gray, and the MFDP proved that African Americans would not sit idly by but would demand their rights of American citizenship. These three women fought to throw open the doors that eventually saw Shirley Chisholm from New York elected as the first black woman to Congress in 1968, Mike Espy as the first black Mississippian since Reconstruction to serve in Congress in 1987, and the election of the first African American President of the United States, Barack Obama. We honor them for their courage and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jacqueline Hamer-Flakes, Pastor Cecil Gray, Julie Henderson, Reuben Adams, Nettsaanett Gray, Barbara Devine Reed, Tiffany Wilson, William Ryan, Mary Carroll (Mac) Ryan, and Elizabeth Ryan as we reflect on the contributions of Fannie Lou Hamer, Annie Devine, and Victoria Gray to their families, communities, and their driving passion to fight for Civil Rights.

HONORING THE LIFE OF U.S. MARINE CORPS WORLD WAR II VETERAN YSABEL CISNEROS

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of U.S. Marine Corps World War II Veteran Ysabel Cisneros.

Ysabel Cisneros was a lifelong resident of Orange County. He was born on October 6, 1925 in Anaheim, CA and raised in the segregated La Jolla barrio in the city of Placentia.

Mr. Cisneros joined the United States Marine Corps at the age of 18 in 1943 at the height of World War II. When given the choice of waiting two weeks, or joining immediately, he chose to enlist immediately and served his boot camp at Camp Pendleton.

Ysabel Cisneros served in the Guam and Palau campaigns that freed the South Pacific from Fascist Japanese oppression. Mr. Cisneros and his company were then chosen to be a part of the invasion of Iwo Jima, a decisive battle in World War II.

Ysabel Cisneros was among the many brave Americans to storm Mount Suribachi, in one of the deadliest battles in American history. During this time, Mr. Cisneros served with and befriended the legendary Ira Hayes, the Native American soldier who helped lift the American flag on Mount Suribachi.

Mr. Cisneros was wounded in battle and spent the remainder of the war recuperating from his injuries. Mr. Cisneros was honorably discharged from the U.S. Marine Corps on June 26, 1946.

Mr. Cisneros settled back in his hometown of Placentia and married his loving wife Amelia in 1947 and lived the remainder of his life.

Ysabel Cisneros is survived by four of his children, 17 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and seven great-great grandchildren.

Let us remember World War II Marine Veteran Ysabel Cisneros, a true American hero.